

AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE

RECOMMENDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF: OCTOBER 16, 2007

DEPARTMENT: CITY ATTORNEY

DIRECTOR: BRADFORD R. JERBIC

☐ Consent ☒ Discussion

SUBJECT:

NEW BILL

Bill No. 2007-61 – Increases the salary of, and provides a vehicle allowance for, the Mayor and City Council. Sponsored by: Mayor Oscar B. Goodman

Fiscal Impact

☐

No Impact

☐

Augmentation Required

☐

Budget Funds Available

Amount: None in current fiscal year

Funding Source:

Dept./Division:

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

This bill will increase the compensation of the Mayor and City Council and provide them a vehicle allowance, to become effective following the next election pertaining to each seat. The increase reflects the recommendations of a Council Review Committee study several years ago. The salary for Council members representing Wards 1 through 6 will be 90% of the salary approved for members of the Clark County Board of Commissioners. The Mayor's salary will be 180% of the salary of the other Council members, and is based upon full-time service of the Mayor. The vehicle allowance will be \$600/mo for the Mayor and \$500/mo for the other members, and is comparable to those for other local officials.

RECOMMENDATION:

This bill should be submitted to a Recommending Committee for review, hearing and recommendation to the City Council for final action.

BACKUP DOCUMENTATION:

1. Bill No. 2007-61
2. Business Impact Statement

Motion made by RICKI Y. BARLOW to Forward to Council without a recommendation, noting COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN'S concern regarding the car allowance

Passed For: 2; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 0

LOIS TARKANIAN, RICKI Y. BARLOW; (Against-None); (Abstain-None); (Did Not Vote-None); (Excused-None)

Minutes:

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN declared the Public Hearing open.

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CHIEF DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY STEED indicated that the proposed bill is complicated because the salary increases and car allowances cannot be implemented during current terms and will be effective as seats come up for election. The proposal is to work off salaries as increased over time through CPI, identify and increase when seats are filled. It also includes a provision where the salary of the Council members, other than the Mayor, will be based according to the County Commissioners salary. The Mayor's salary will be based upon a percentage of the other Council members; and based upon the Mayor's full-time service prohibiting outside employment. COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN added that this is necessary to show progression.

CHIEF CITY ATTORNEY STEED commented that the increases will still be done by ordinance and subject to the public-hearing process, but will not be in the code as in the past.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN stated it is only fair that increases begin as new members are elected. But she had a concern about a car allowance, because it gets into a complicated situation or could be perceived as being misused. She questioned why everybody seems to be upset about connecting Council salaries to the salaries of the County Commissioners; it seems fair. CITY MANAGER SELBY explained that this recommendation came from a citizen committee that was formed to review the Council's salary and was reintroduced into this ordinance. The County Commissioners' salaries are set by the legislative process. This seems to be a fair and equitable way to set the Council salaries.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN reiterated tying the Council's salaries to the Commissioners' salaries, which are approved by the legislature, is fair. She suggested that it would be pro active to inform the media about the recommendation by the citizens committee. CITY MANAGER SELBY responded that the findings of the committee were provided to the media in the City Manager and Council informational report, but the media chose not to use it. He informed the Councilwoman that the 90 percent increase recommendation came from the citizen committee in 1992.

COUNCILMAN BARLOW supported the ordinance. He liked the fact that the voters would have an opportunity to choose a Council representative based on his/her ability to represent them, not the salary. He agreed that the Mayor's seat should be full-time. MAYOR GOODMAN has done an outstanding job for the City of Las Vegas and should down in record as the greatest mayor to date. Both the Councilman and Councilwoman agreed that the Mayor is already working full-time. The next mayor will have really big shoes to fill.

In response to the Councilman's query, CITY MANAGER SELBY verified that the car allowance was also a recommendation made by the citizen committee and is common in large cities. The County Commission does not have it, but other local municipalities do. It allows for the car traveling costs associated with city business and neighborhood meetings. The car allowance is considered compensation and is reflected in the paycheck. MARK VINCENT, Director of Finance and Business Services, indicated that the car allowance is considered taxable compensation, not salary, which will not be included in PERS (Public Employees Retirement System). COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN expressed concern about allowing a car allowance in addition to a substantial salary increase, which citizens might feel would be sufficient to cover car expenses. Commissioners do not receive a car allowance.

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TED RUSSELL, Las Vegas resident, appeared in support and commented on the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority meritorious salary increase. He opined that a car allowance does not really matter and that it is reasonable to be on par with Clark County. He verified with CHIEF DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY STEED that the full-time mayor position cannot have other employment. He does not understand why the media is upset; the salary increase seems very just and equitable. His understanding is that the Mayor donates his salary to charity.

CHIEF DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY STEED commented that there was a concern about the business impact statement for this bill. The reason there is no exception for this bill, even though it does not impact a business, is that it is designed to address impact of fees or other requirements that are imposed upon businesses and this simply is an authorization of expenditures.

Additionally, the media misunderstood the reason for the impact statement.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN suggested that the media be invited to a meeting where this type of information could be provided to them. CITY MANAGER SELBY responded that he and the Mayor had an editorial meeting with TOM MITCHELL of the Review Journal and this topic was discussed, as well as the discussion that the increases are concurrent with the County Commissioners' increases. Therefore, in the future, the City Council would not have to vote on salary increases because they would be tied to the County's increases, as set by the legislature.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN could not support COUNCILMAN BARLOW'S recommendation for approval because of her concern about the car allowance; therefore, CHIEF DEPUTY CITY ATTORNEY STEED suggested forwarding the bill to the Council without a recommendation, noting the Councilwoman's concern about the car allowance.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN declared the Public Hearing closed.